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FOREIGN PAUPERS AND NATURALIZATION LAWS.

[To accompany bills H. R. Nos. 873 and 874.]

JULY 2, 1838.

Mr. RUSSELL, from the Select Committee appointed on the subject, made the following

REPORT:

The Select Committee to which were referred the memorial of the Mayor, Aldermen, and Commonalty of the city of New York, the memorial of the inhabitants of the counties of Washington, Kings, and several others in the State of New York, that of the municipal government in the city of New York, that of citizens of Sutton, that of the citizens of Milbury, in the State of Massachusetts, and that of the "Native American Association," in the city of Washington, in the District of Columbia, and several others from different States, praying a *Report of the Naturalization Laws of the United States, or such an alteration thereof as shall extend the time of residence in the United States of foreigners, previous to their being admitted to the exercise of political rights, beyond the period which is required by the existing laws; and also praying the passage of a law which will effectually prevent the introduction of paupers and convicts from foreign countries into the United States; also, the remonstrance of a number of German citizens living in the southern part of the State of Missouri, against granting the prayer of the memorialists, respectfully report:*

The memorialists allege that the number of emigrants from foreign countries into the United States is increasing with such rapidity as to jeopardise the peace and tranquillity of our citizens, if not the permanency of the civil, religious, and political institutions of the United States. That many of them are the outcasts of foreign countries, paupers, vagrants, and malefactors, from the poor-houses and penitentiaries of Europe, sent hither at the expense of foreign Governments, to relieve them from the burden of their maintenance. That, from the destitute condition of this class when they arrive in this country, they immediately become burdensome to our citizens, exhausting the accumulated funds which had been raised, and were being disbursed, by the various charitable institutions in our country, for the use of our own unfortunate and destitute citizens. Among those who have been sent hither, are many laboring under the infirmities of old age, whose days of usefulness and vigor have been spent in England, or upon the continent of Europe; and, when they can be no longer useful in their native country, are sent among us, entirely destitute, to linger out a friendless and burdensome existence in a strange land. Others, equally helpless and burdensome from natural infirmities, bearing unquestionable indications of their having been paupers in their native land. Others, and not a few, laboring under mental aberration, evidently of long standing, and incurable. Others illiterate; and there is hardly any degree of mental infirmity which affects mankind, and which is as various as the shades of human character, intermediate, mere eccentricity and absolute phrensy, which may not be found among these, thus cast upon our country. Others, whose residence among us is still more objectionable, are convicts from the European states, condemned to imprisonment in their native country for aggravated offences against their laws, and released from imprisonment only on condition of taking up their residence in this western hemisphere. It is the concentration of these classes of foreigners in the United States, from various foreign countries, which has drawn forth these simultaneous appeals to Congress, from the different sections of the Union, to save our country and our citizens from the blighting influence of such a population, and more especially the laboring class. An American laborer is among the most useful of our citizens; and the primeval principle which was proclaimed to man, that he should "earn his bread by the sweat of his brow," he acknowledges as a rule of duty, prescribing a reasonable service, from which neither habit nor inclination prompts him to depart; his pride and ambition are stimulated by a desire to attain independence, and to maintain his family with the fruits of his own labor, and, in the vigor of manhood, to accumulate a treasure which will smooth the pathway of his declining years, and alleviate the sorrows incident to old age. Whatever causes may conspire in the European states to produce pauperism, few exist here; and it is believed to be not only unreasonable, but unjust, to permit foreign Governments to relieve themselves from the maintenance of their own poor, which is caused principally by their forms of government, their policy, and their laws, at the expense of the citizens of the United States. Their collision with our citizens in the various pursuits of private life, their disregard of those social, moral, and political obligations which control the action of the American people, and attach them to the homes of their fathers, render them obnoxious to suspicion and distrust, and unwelcome associates in their daily toil. It is estimated that there are about 146,000 foreigners who annually arrive in the United States; many of them entirely destitute of the necessities of life, and depending for daily subsistence upon public or private charity.

To enable the committee to obtain all the information which was accessible, the following interrogatories were propounded to the Mayors of the respective cities of Boston, New York, Philadelphia, Baltimore, Charleston, (S. C.) and New Orleans, and to the Presidents of the Native American Associations in the city of New York and in the District of Columbia:

1st. What number of foreign emigrants arrive at New York, Boston, Philadelphia, Baltimore, Charleston, and New Orleans, respectively, in each year, and have done for the last ten years?

2d. What number have arrived within the United States each year, within the same period, and what in each State?

3d. From what countries have they emigrated?

4th. What proportion bring with them the means of subsisting themselves and families?

5th. What proportion are paupers?

6th. How is the expense of transportation hither of such as are poor defrayed, and by whom?

7th. Are there, within your knowledge, or have you been informed, of any frauds practised in procuring certificates of naturalization under the present laws of the United States? And, if so, how and by what means are such frauds practised; and what remedy can you suggest for their prevention?

8th. Is the emigration of any particular class of foreigners into the United States at this time, prejudicial to the interests of the citizens, or dangerous to the institutions of the United States? If so, what class, and what remedy can you suggest for avoiding the evil apprehended?

9th. What proportion of the inmates of poor-houses and penitentiaries are native American citizens?

10th. What is the expense per week of maintaining an adult pauper?

The prompt answers which have been returned to these interrogatories from the Native American Association in the city of Washington, and the Mayors of the respective cities of Boston and New York, have greatly alleviated the labors of the committee, and present a combination of facts which cannot fail to attract the attention of the American people, and to establish the necessity of immediate legislative action, not only by Congress within the sphere of its powers, but also by many of the States in theirs, that, by an harmonious co-operation, existing evils may be remedied, and impending calamities averted.

There is probably a pauper population in the United States of about 105,000 who are supported at public expense; and it is estimated that more than one-half the number (and these the most helpless and expensive) are foreigners. On the 12th of June, 1837, there were in the almshouse, in the city of New York, 3,074, of which number three-fourths were foreigners; and of 1,200 admitted into the almshouse at Bellevue, 982 were aliens; and during the year preceding the 29th March, 1837, there had been supported or relieved at these establishments, 6,874 foreigners. On the 1st of May, 1837, there were in the Bellevue almshouse 690 men and 747 women; and by the report of the resident physician of the hospital, it appears that of 1,209 which were admitted into his department during the year ending the 1st of January, 1837, 502 were received into the maniac department; and that of the whole number only 206 were born in America. In 1836, there were in the almshouse at Boston, Massachusetts, 506 Americans and 673 foreigners; and in that of Philadelphia, 1,505 Americans and 1,266 foreigners. The average expense of supporting a pauper in the United States is estimated at about \$42 a year. If the estimate of numbers and the expense of their maintenance be correct, it will be seen that the citizens of the United States are paying annually, for the support of their pauper population, \$1,400,000, one-half of which, at least, is paid to support foreign paupers; or, in other words, the citizens of the United States are contributing annually \$2,200,000 to relieve foreign governments from the support of their own poor.

In a communication to the Common Council of the city of New York, the late Mayor, in relation to this foreign population, remarks that, "our streets are filled with these wandering crowds, clustering in our city, unaccustomed to our climate, without money, without employment, without friends, many not speaking our language, and without dependence for food, or raiment, or fire-side. What is to become of them? is a question of serious import: our whole almshouse department is so full that no more can be received without manifest hazard to the health of the inmates; petitions signed by hundreds, asking for work, are presented in vain; private associations for relief are almost wholly without funds; thousands must therefore wander to and fro, filling every part of our happy land with squalid poverty and profligacy."

The tax for the support of paupers in that city has more than doubled in seven years; and this remarkable coincidence will be found, that, in the same period of time, the foreign population in the city will have a fraction more than doubled. From this it is evident that, in proportion to emigration from foreign countries, pauperism is increased in nearly an equal degree with population from abroad.

The population in the city of Washington, in the District of Columbia, is 22,000. During the five preceding years, there were 675 paupers admitted into the infirmary in the city of Washington, and 1,385 committed for disorderly conduct. The average number of paupers per year is 195, and the average number of vagrants for the same period is 277, making an aggregate of paupers and vagrants of 472, or one pauper and vagrant to every 46 inhabitants.

The number of resident paupers for the last ten years was 2,125, and of foreign alien paupers 1,120, and paupers from the different States 934, constituting an aggregate for ten years of 4,179. Out of 168 paupers admitted to the poor-house proper, in the city of Washington, in 1837, 70 were foreigners. From May, 1837, to February, 1838, 118 were admitted; and of the white males admitted about two-thirds were foreigners. In 1832, the expenditure for the support of the poor, infirm, and lunatics in the city was \$3,775; and the committee have the most authentic information, that more than one-ninth of the receipts for taxes on real and personal property, in the city, has been imposed for the support of paupers. From these facts it appears that the inhabitants of the city are paying, on an average, for the support of paupers and vagrants from abroad, \$2,245, annually. This result, however, is produced

upon the hypothesis that only one-half are foreigners, when the probability is that a much greater proportion are from abroad.

In a memorial recently presented to the Mayor and Aldermen of the city of New York, it is stated that during the last seven years 296,259 foreigners arrived at the port of New York. In 1835, the whole population in the city of New York was 270,089. Thus it will be seen, that in the short period of seven years, the number of foreigners who congregated in the city of New York was 26,170 more than the whole population which that city contained in 1835.

In the memorial it is also stated that "on the 1st of January, 1837, 982 foreigners and 227 native American citizens had been admitted to the hospital at Bellevue the preceding year. On the 1st of May last, there were in the almshouse 1,437 paupers. Allowing the same proportion of foreigners as in the hospital, and there would be 1,068 foreigners and 369 native citizens in the almshouse."

"It appears from the report of a committee monthly appointed by the Board of Aldermen of this city, that there were, at the date of that report, 3,070 paupers in the almshouse; more than three-fourths of whom are foreigners. How many more of this class live upon private charities, let the swarm of mendicants who daily and nightly infest our streets attest."

At a recent date, it appears that the number of convicts confined at Sing Sing, New York, was 800, of whom 693 were foreigners.

In the year ending in August, 1836, there were received into the Boston House of Refuge 866 paupers, 516 of whom were foreigners. From the 1st of January to the 25th of April, 1837, there were 264 paupers admitted to the same House of Refuge, 160 of whom were aliens. "It must be born in mind says [this report] that those foreigners only who arrive in vessels of forty tons burden and upwards are registered and taken into the account above stated. There are hundreds, nay thousands, who come in vessels of less size, and by the way of the Canadas. It is confidently believed that the whole number of foreign emigrants who have arrived in this city since 1830, amounts to more than 500,000."

In 1807, the foreign population in the United States bore a proportion to the native of about one to forty; now the proportion is about one to nineteen.

This unnatural increase of population, combining in social intercourse strangers possessing different habits, speaking different languages, many of them unable to either read or write, not capable of duly appreciating their own rights, or their obligations to the municipal regulations of the country which protects them, with habits established for duplicity, idleness, and crime, would naturally, if not necessarily, produce interruption to that unity and peaceful interchange of kind offices which so peculiarly characterize the American people.

In an address recently presented to the Mayor of the city of New York, it is stated, "The extent of the influx of foreigners of the lower classes seems not to be fully understood. There are at least, from England and Ireland alone, more than a hundred and twenty thousand emigrants who yearly reach our shores by direct or indirect courses. Sixty-five thousand emigrants came directly to New York and its neighborhood last year; and as many reached the States north of the Potomac, in the same space of time, in some way or another. This is a moderate calculation. The Encyclopedia Americana, a translation and enlargement of the German Conversations Lexicon, edited by a foreigner, states, that from thirty-five thousand to five hundred thousand emigrants arrive in this country (meaning the Canadas and the United States) every year. But few of them, it is well known, stay in Canadas; they prefer our Government to the colonial. This statement is corroborated by the London Encyclopedia, which urges the British Government to send out a million of emigrants a year, until a proper depletion is made of the swollen body of their population, and reckons up the cost, making it over five pounds sterling a head, which is double the amount they pay for landing the inmates of their almshouses and jails at the present time. They now pay about five dollars a head for passage-money, and their provisions cost about ten dollars each."

The consequence of such an amalgamation must be dissatisfaction, if not violence, and extensive violation of personal rights; these produce litigation, criminal prosecutions, and consequently large disbursements of the public money. An examination (especially in the towns where this foreign population assemble) of the calendar of criminal prosecutions, will show the alarming extent of this evil. If, in a time of peace and tranquility, such consequences flow from mingling in our community such discordant materials, what security can there be in a state of war, when concert and co-operation become essential to national security.

The Mayor of the city of New York communicated his annual message to the Common Council of that city on the 14th of May, 1838, from which the following extracts are taken: "Your early and most serious examination of our entire pauper system, including the contemplated removal of the almshouse to Blackwell's island, or to Randall's island, and the establishment of a work-house, is daily becoming more necessary. It is believed that, by a laborious investigation, and upon consequent new arrangements of the various departments, the enormous expenses may be diminished, or at least prevented from being increased, except in a few absolutely unavoidable cases."

If the addition of numbers and cost of maintenance, are to go on progressively, as may be learned from the following particulars has thus far been the case, many years will not elapse before they will become a burden greater than the tax-payers will submit to. By a report from the commissioners, it appears that the number of inmates in the almshouse, including the hospitals and Long Island farms, on the 8th of September, 1837, was

Number in the bridewell,	132
Number in the penitentiary,	652
Making a total of	3,332
Foreigners,	2,045
Native Americans,	1,287
	3,332

A similar statement of 10th September, 1836,

is added, in order to exhibit the increase for one year, and to show that eighty-eight per cent. of that increase are foreigners.

Number of inmates in the almshouses,	1,833
Number of inmates in bridewell,	91
Number of inmates in penitentiary,	403
	2,327
Of these, there were foreigners,	1,158
native Americans,	1,169
	2,327
Total number 8th September, 1837, as above,	3,332
Total number 10th Sept., 1836,	2,327
Increase in one year,	1,005
Of this number there are foreigners,	887
And native Americans,	118
	1,005

In giving these items, the commissioners submit the following:

"This exhibit, it is believed, justifies the demand for increased commutation fees, and points to the necessity of enforcing all laws touching the emigration of foreign emigrants. It is noticed also that a considerable portion of the children classed as natives, are born of foreign parents shortly after their arrival here."

On the 8th of May instant, the number of persons in the almshouse alone was 1,342; of these 719 were foreigners; in the hospital, also, 135 persons, of whom 105 were foreigners: in the lunatic hall, 170, of whom 110 were foreigners: of the 713 children on the Long Island farms, 273 are of foreign birth: the number in bridewell 134, and 73 of them foreigners: in the penitentiary 621 persons, of which number 320 are foreigners—making a total of 3,367; foreigners 1,606. And it must not be forgotten that large amounts of fuel, provisions, and money, are distributed annually, by the commissioners, to the poor and the needy who remain at their homes. And, were it not for the poverty of the times, we should feel much surprised that the almshouse should contain so many inmates, when we recollect that our humane and benevolent inhabitants also collect and distribute very large amounts within the abodes of poverty and suffering; that there are, moreover, an extensive city hospital, lunatic asylum, a seaman's retreat, sailor's snug harbor, and nearly twenty other institutions for the cure of the sick, and for the relief of the poor, the aged, the blind, the deaf, the orphan, the juvenile delinquent, and for the amelioration of suffering and misfortune of every denomination."

The arrivals into the city of New York of foreign emigrants, in the eight years preceding 1837, have been fourfold. Those from Cork alone, in 1836, were 4,993; and from the returns of the State Department, under the law of 2d March, 1819, it appears that, from the 1st of January to the 27th July, 1837, the increase at the port of New York of foreigners over that of the preceding year was in the ratio of four to one.

The amount expended in the State of New York, in the year 1836, for support of the poor, is stated to have been \$396,100 05; and during the same period, the State received for tolls on the Champlain canal, which is the most productive in the State except one, the sum of about \$132,000. If one-half the expense of supporting the poor in that year was paid for the support of foreign poor, of which the committee entertain no doubt, it will be seen that the receipts from the Champlain canal for one year and half have been insufficient to maintain the foreign poor in that State for a single year; or, in other words, we are giving the entire avails of that splendid improvement, and, in addition thereto, sixty-six thousand dollars a year, to relieve foreign Governments from the maintenance of their own poor.

The evidence of the wisdom of the American people, if not their pride, is to be found in their naval armament, which costs them annually something over five millions of dollars, and we are paying within half a million of that amount for the support of our poor, and one-half of them at least foreigners.

In 1837 there were taught in the common schools in the State of Pennsylvania, 139,604 scholars, exclusive of 11,234 taught in Philadelphia, at an expense of \$132,000 in both places. It is estimated that there are in the city of Philadelphia above 1,515 foreign paupers, which, at the average expense at that place per annum of \$50 each, will amount to \$75,750 annually. Thus it will be seen that the city of Philadelphia pays for the support of foreign paupers more than one-half as much as the State pays for the common-school education of the children of their own citizens throughout the entire State of Pennsylvania. And in the city of Philadelphia there is paid seven times as much for the support of the poor of foreign countries, as that city pays to instruct her own children in the elements of an ordinary education.

It appears from a report made to the Legislature in the State of New York, by the Secretary of State, who is *ex officio* commissioner of common schools, that, in the year 1835, 532,167 children in that State received the benefits of a common-school education, at an expense of \$1,235,256 02; of this sum \$313,376 01 are stated to have been "defrayed from the public money." And it will be found that for the same year, the city of New York alone paid \$235,506 63 for the support of their pauper population; or, in other words, the city of New York alone paid for the support of foreign paupers an amount equal to one-third the sum paid by the whole State for the education of her own children. It is stated that in one day more than one thousand three hundred paupers from Ireland, applied to the commissioners of the almshouse in the city of New York for relief.

In 1825, the whole number of aliens in the State of New York was 40,430. By the late census, taken in 1835, it appears that the whole population in that State was 2,174,517; of which number it is supposed there were at least 163,337 aliens, or about one alien to every 13 native and naturalized citizens in the State; from which it appears that the increase of aliens within the ten years preceding 1835, in that State, has been at the rate of three hundred per centum.

The following table will show not only the

alien increase of pauperism in our Atlantic towns, but also the consequences which our citizens are subjected to by the policy adopted by foreign Governments for their own relief, by transporting, at their own expense, to America, this vagrant population:

In New York, 1820, the number relieved was 15,506 at cost of \$246,752 80	
1831, " " " 15,564 " 245,483 21	
1832, " " " 33,774 " 295,239 18	
1834, " " " 32,798 " 304,918 21	
1835, " " " 38,362 " 323,741 12	
1836, " " " 37,959 " 396,100 05	

It is said, that, in New Hampshire, in the year 1800, there was only one pauper to every 333 inhabitants; that, in 1820, there was one pauper to every 100 of the inhabitants; and that the expense of maintaining their paupers had increased from \$17,000, in the former year, to \$80,000 in the latter. When the contiguity of this State to that of a foreign Government, and its peculiarly exposed situation to the ingress of mendicants from abroad, are taken into consideration, few will hesitate to account for this extraordinary increase of pauperism in that State.

In the State of Massachusetts, it is said that the number of paupers about doubled in the ten years preceding 1832.

In the district of Southwark and the Northern Liberties alone, in Philadelphia, there were, in the year 1810, 1,390, and in the year 1820, there were 2,500; their number having nearly doubled in ten years. While the late war continued with Great Britain, there was no emigration from that country to the United States; and for several years after the termination of hostilities between the two countries, the number of emigrants hither was quite limited. And the fact is not unworthy of notice, that, in proportion as the number of emigrants increases or diminishes, is the increase or diminution of paupers and convicts in the penitentiaries and poor-houses in that and the other Atlantic cities. And at the time when the emigration from Europe was interrupted, the number of poor in the city of Philadelphia was reduced down to fourteen hundred; and, in 1822, when the policy of some of the European states was in successful operation of relieving themselves from the burden of maintaining their own poor, by transporting them to America, the number in the almshouse in that city was increased to 3,090.

It is said that, within the last 25 years, \$7,000,000 have been expended in the city and county of Philadelphia for the support of the poor; and while the population there has increased in a ratio of 67 per cent., the poor-rates have increased nearly at the rate of 87.

In the absence of particular accounts in many of the States of the number of their paupers, in others of the amount paid for their support, their numbers cannot be ascertained with absolute precision; yet, upon the hypotheses assumed in the annexed answer of the Native American Association of the city of Washington, to the interrogatories propounded to that Association, it is believed the results arrived at may be confidently relied on.

The fact is unquestionable that large numbers of foreigners are annually brought to our country by the authority, and at the expense of, foreign governments, and landed upon our shores in a state of absolute destitution and dependence; many of them of the most idle and vicious class; in their personal appearance the most offensive and loathsome; and their numbers increasing with such rapidity by emigration, as to become burdensome to the American people; our own citizens being obliged to contribute largely for their own earnings to support them in idleness. It is within the recollection of all, that within the last few years large supplies of breadstuffs from Europe have been imported into the United States, and not only paid for by the earnings of our citizens, but applied to the maintenance of the pauper population of the very country from which these breadstuffs have been obtained. And it is for protection and defence against evils of this description, that the American citizens have implored the interposition of Congress. The necessity for importing provisions from abroad has arisen, in some degree, from the increase of population in the United States, much greater than the natural increment of the American people, with a population of 12,866,000, the natural increase of which would be 146,325 less than what it now is, taking into account the natural increase of births over deaths. If this estimate is correct, it shows that our population is increased annually 146,325 from other than natural causes; and whence this increase but by emigration from abroad? And when it is borne in mind that this foreign pauper population produces little, if any thing, from their own labor, but are supplied principally, if not entirely, from the labor of our own citizens, the reason for importing breadstuffs from abroad will be measurably accounted for.

The committee have estimated the number of emigrants who arrive in this country from abroad at 150,000 annually; and the confidence in the correctness of that estimate will be strengthened by the fact, that the annual increase of population in the United States is greater, by 146,325, than the natural increase of population would amount to annually.

On the 4th of July, 1836, a resolution was adopted in the Senate of the United States, directing the Secretary of the Treasury to cause to be collected and laid before the Senate, at its next session, all such facts and information as

(See last page.)